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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: CZECH REPUBLIC SEES TIME AS NOT RIPE FOR RUSSIAN  
OECD MEMBERSHIP

REF: STATE 66309

On April 15 we discussed the Czech Republic's position on membership in OECD for Russia with Vladimir Dolejsi, an officer in the Department of Multilateral Relations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Dolejsi confirmed that the Czech Republic remains convinced that the time for Russia's membership in the OECD is "not right". The Czechs support expanded economic cooperation with Russia, Brazil, India and China, and have been active in discussions on reform of trade regulations in those countries within the OECD, Dolejsi said. He added that Prime Minister Stanislav Gross responded in March of this year to a letter from Russian Prime Minister Fradkov seeking Czech support for OECD membership, telling Fradkov that while the Czech Republic recognizes Russia's membership as an ultimate goal, the Czech Republic is not prepared at this time to support its immediate entry into the organization as a full member.

HILLAS